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Call for Pilot Project Ideas for Vietnam

“Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter”

The “Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter” project will support selected pilot projects through financial contributions in the area of sustainable consumption and production of plastic and plastic waste management in Vietnam. Please find further information about the process hereafter.

1. Background Information

Driven by rapid urbanisation, economic development and changing consumption and production patterns, the amount of single-use packaging and plastic items is rapidly increasing in East and Southeast Asia. At the same time, waste management systems still lack effectiveness in terms of environmentally sound collection, sorting, recycling, energy recovery and disposal of packaging waste. These trends significantly contribute to marine littering – a growing regional and global threat to marine ecosystems and fisheries as well as the tourism sector. Governments, businesses, academia and civil society increasingly recognise that a switch towards a circular economy approach to plastic waste is necessary to tackle these challenges.

The project “Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter” supports the transition towards a circular economy for plastics and sustainable plastic consumption and production in East and Southeast Asia to contribute to a significant reduction of marine litter. It implements advisory services and pilot projects in close cooperation with regional, national and local partners.

The project is funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Expertise France. Project activities are defined and implemented in close cooperation with regional, national and local partners. On-going initiatives by other international organisations, the public and private sectors, civil society and academia are taken into account. In Vietnam, the national project partner is the Ministry of the Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).

2. Submission of pilot project ideas

2.1 Scope

Pilot projects are a vital part of the implementation of the “Rethinking Plastics” project and selected ideas will be supported.

The selected pilot projects will serve to **establish and disseminate good practices** and shall consist of **tangible initiatives** that **demonstrate change and results**. They shall **test** new approaches or **up-scale** existing best practices with a close link to **policy** dialogues and processes, strategies and regulatory reforms at national and regional level.

Ideas are sought for pilot projects in the area of **Sustainable consumption and production of plastic**. These could cover the design for reuse and recyclability, standards for plastic recyclates as well as alternatives to plastics (e.g. single-use plastic cups, plastic bags, plastic straws, Styrofoam food containers) and the use of primary microplastics in products. They will aim to bring together public, civil society, academia and private sector **stakeholders** in a specific location (city, region, province) in Vietnam. Further information about the topics can be found under 3.

2.2 Financial contributions

The “Rethinking Plastics” project will support pilot projects by recipient organisations through financial contributions in form of grants or local subsidies.

Financial contributions for 1-4 pilot projects can range from **90,000 EUR (minimum amount) up to 180,000 EUR (maximum amount)**.

The estimated budget in the concept note can be submitted in VND and EURO. Taxes, including VAT, are not eligible. The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the European Union.

2.3 Language

The call for project ideas shall be submitted in both languages Vietnamese and English. The pilot project can be implemented in Vietnamese. All reports and summaries shall be submitted in Vietnamese and English.

2.4 Concept notes

The submission of ideas for pilot projects takes place in form of a **concept note (see attached template)**. Other formats will not be accepted. The concept note provides the basis for assessing the technical criteria. Further assessments on both administrative and technical criteria will also be led on the pre-selected projects (see section 6).

2.5 Timing and deadlines

The implementation of each pilot project can run until 28th of February 2022 with a minimum duration of 12 months. It is expected to start in August 2020, or earlier if possible.

The deadline for the submission of the concept notes (see template) is 15 March 2020. Pre-selected pilot projects will be informed in March/April 2020 and asked to prepare a full project proposal with a budget and additional documents.

3. Area of action

The pilot project idea should concentrate **on activities in Vietnam** in the following area:
Sustainable consumption and production of plastic products and alternatives

Pilot projects could contribute to establish sustainable alternatives to plastic bags, cups, straws, cutlery, food containers, small portion sachets as well as other types of packaging and items by answering the following questions: Which alternative solutions are feasible in terms of reusability and material choice and sustainable in terms of ecological, social and economic

aspects? How to promote product and system design for reuse, recyclability and the application of recycled materials without plastic leakage into the environment? Which packaging enables access to safe consumer goods for all levels of income while reducing the generation and leakage of plastic waste?

Potential categories of pilot projects are (amongst others):

- **Plastic waste free markets / schools / public institutions and space:** Markets, supermarkets, schools, and academic institutions etc. might provide a suitable scope for pilot projects due their clear system boundaries and stakeholders. Pilot projects could envisage a transformation process leading to a significant reduction of single-use plastics (e.g. bags, straws, cups, plates, cutlery, boxes, Styrofoam). Packaging from alternative materials (e.g. cupboard, paper, wood, metal) or deposit-refund schemes for reusable beverage containers might be tested. A transformation process might involve baseline studies on current waste generation and management practices as well as life-cycle assessments of alternatives, including potential effects on reducing plastic leakage into the environment. It could include moderated multi-stakeholder dialogues with vendors, suppliers, restaurants, market or school authorities, city officials and others. It could involve awareness raising campaigns to inform consumers about plastic issues and intended changes regarding consumption patterns.
- **Plastic waste free tourism / leisure industry:** The tourism industry has an inherent business interest in keeping the landscape, beaches and the ocean clean. Pilot projects could therefore focus on dialogue processes and partnerships with hotels, restaurants, retailers, tourism operators, public authorities, civil society, national parks and other stakeholders in touristic or leisure areas. Joint activities could consist in identifying reusable and recyclable alternatives to substitute single-use plastics. Retail chains of drinks in reusable beverage containers and deposit-refund schemes for cups used in specific areas could be explored. Awareness raising for tourists and inhabitants, including beach clean-ups, could be involved. Pilot projects could also consider innovative organisational solutions (e.g. stakeholder alliances, public-private partnerships) or include mechanisms to raise environmental tourism fees that support the financing schemes for the collection and treatment of remaining waste.
- **Circular product design:** The design of products and packaging in terms of material composition, form and colour is crucial for its ability to be reused or recycled. Pilot projects could conduct stakeholder dialogues between the public and private sector, civil society and academia at local, national or regional level for the elaboration of technical standards e.g. to optimise packaging design for recyclability, to expand the use of recycled materials in new products and to avoid the use of primary microplastics in cosmetics. Pilot projects could also explore options and specific value chains to substitute, for certain uses, plastics through organic, biodegradable materials (e.g. seaweed, cassava, rice straws, bamboo, wood, cotton) or to reduce packaging together with packaging producers, the consumer goods industry, retailers and the delivery sector. They could involve assessments of technological options as well as the related environmental, social and economic aspects. Pilot project can foresee the use of recycled material product design (e.g. upcycling).

Note that a second call for proposal is being issued on the topic of extended producer / stakeholder responsibility (EPR) and deposit-return schemes (DRS) for managing packaging waste. Please see the Expertise France website for further details.

4. Technical Criteria

The technical criteria for evaluating and ranking project ideas will be based on the following criteria. Each concept note will receive an overall score out of 80 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid above, with scores between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

1. Relevance of the pilot project	Sub-score	40
1.1 To what extent is the proposal relevant to the objectives and priorities of the call for ideas?	5	
1.2 Is the innovative nature (technical and organisational solutions and collaboration networks) of the proposal relevant and sufficient to the themes chosen? Is it well presented?	5	
1.3 To what extent is the proposal relevant to the particular needs and characteristics of the country, area and beneficiaries of the intervention (environmental, social and economic aspects)?	5	
1.4 To what extent can the project have bridges, both in terms of indirect impacts and capitalization, with other areas of intervention?	5	
1.5 To what extent are the parties involved (end beneficiaries, target groups) clearly defined and strategically selected? Have their needs been clearly defined and are they adequately addressed in the proposal?	5	
1.6 Will ownership of beneficiaries and durability of the action after completion of the project be sufficient ?	5	
1.7 To what extent is the proposal suitable to showcase concrete solutions for public communication and visibility?	5	
1.8 To what extent is the proposal considering international best practices?	5	
2. Design of the pilot project	Sub-score	20
2.1 Is the action feasible and logical in relation to the objectives and expected results, particularly with regard to the territory under consideration for implementation?	5	
2.2 Does the proposal contain specific elements promoting gender equality, targeting the most vulnerable populations (notably informal sector), and taking into account the different project risks (health & safety, conflicts, human rights, environmental aspects)?	5	
2.3 Is the action ultimately likely to be up-scaled and/or replicated in other locations?	5	
2.4 Is the method adopted to promote the dissemination of lessons learned and results acquired during the action likely to generate impacts on a larger scale and in the longer term?	5	
3. Management of the pilot project	Sub-score	20

3.1 Has the proponent demonstrated sufficient experience in the area of action, multi-stakeholder project implementation (coordination, financial management and monitoring / evaluation) and capitalization?	10	
3.2 Is the methodology for project implementation (coordination, financial management and monitoring / evaluation) and capitalization sufficiently described and appropriate?	10	
TOTAL SCORE	80	

5. Administrative Criteria

The following paragraphs outline the administrative criteria that applicants (i.e. lead applicant and any potential co-applicants) must meet in order to be eligible under this call for ideas. Additional administrative criteria will be further assessed during the full project proposal phase for those that have been pre-selected.

5.1. Lead applicant

In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person;
- be a non-profit making; and
- be established in¹ Vietnam or to be established in a State member of European Union;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with any potential co-applicants or affiliated entities, and not acting as an intermediary.

Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide on contract procedures for European Union External Action (PRAG) (see [here](#))². In the concept note, the lead applicant must declare in the 'Declaration(s) by the lead applicant' section, that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicants or the affiliated entities are not in any of these situations.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary, identified as the coordinator. The coordinator is the main interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinates the design and implementation of the action. Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures

¹ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

² Lead applicants, co-applicants, or affiliated entities (and in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants or the affiliated entities) are informed that, if they are in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide (see [here](#)), their personal details (i.e. name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract.

(see Section 2.4. of the PRAG, see [here](#)) at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract³.

5.2 Co-applicant(s)

The lead applicant may act with co-applicant(s) and form a Consortium. Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant. Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself, and must also sign the mandate in the concept note.

5.3 Other requirements

Eligible implementing organisations of the pilot projects are **public-benefit / non-profit organisations**. These can be for example:

- a) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- b) Inter-governmental organisations
- c) Universities, Institutes, Think Tanks, Foundations and Associations
- d) Local or provincial government entities such as municipalities and Provincial Offices of Natural Resources and Environment, national government entities

During the pre-selection of project ideas and before the preparation of full project proposals, a **check of the public-benefit / non-profit status** as well as an **assessment of the administrative eligibility** of the potential recipient organisation will take place. This involves an assessment on the organisation's legal form, the public-benefit status, the accounting system, the contract award procedures, the internal and external controls and previous experience.

The **recipient organisation's headquarters** may be located in or outside Vietnam, provided the organisation can prove collaboration with stakeholders in Vietnam. Forwarding of funds to third parties needs to be mentioned in the full project proposal, documentation on the final recipients is to be provided.

For-profit organisations (e.g. consulting companies, productive industrial companies, start-ups) can be part of the project implementation as sub-contractors of the recipient non-profit organisation. However, the following conditions apply:

- The activities financed should be primarily of public benefit and not primarily serve their core business interest
- Transparent and strict tendering procedures need to be followed and documented according to the rules and procedures of GIZ and in coordination with the GIZ contracts department. Sub-contractors cannot be named in the full project proposal.

Project ideas and full project proposals involving **partnerships and collaborations** between different organisations and types of stakeholders (public, private, civil society, academia) or different locations will be preferred in order to ensure broad ownership and long-term continuation/up-scaling.

³ The updated lists of sanctions are available at www.sanctionsmap.eu.

Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

Project ideas and full project proposals involving **own financial or in-kind contributions** by the recipient organisation will be preferred. Financial contributions by the project can only cover costs that arise during the project duration (non-retroactivity of costs).

6. Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria. If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 5, the application will be rejected on this sole basis. During the administrative check, the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified, which also includes an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action (see 'Technical Criteria').

Up to 8 concept notes will be evaluated and asked to submit a full project proposal. Please note: The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is 180,000 EUR. Expertise France reserves the right not to award all available funds, due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received.

7. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'. The reimbursement of eligible may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for ideas, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract of the PRAG (see [Annex G - Annex II - General conditions, E3h2](#)).

The contracting authority has its own audit and verification system that has been previously selected in respect of the applicable procurement rules. The applicants (and where applicable their affiliated entities) agree that the expenditure verification(s) referred to in Article 15.7 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract of the PRAG (see [Annex G - Annex II - General conditions, E3h2](#)) will be carried out by the contracting authority or any external body authorised by Expertise France.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the prior written authorisation of the contracting authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided. If any of the applicants or affiliated entities is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are normally not eligible costs.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations
- VAT.

7. Deadline and contact person

Please submit the concept note for pilot project ideas by using our template attached. Further information and the template can also be found here: <https://beatplasticpollution.eu/rethinking-plastics/>

Please send the concept note to fanny.quertamp@expertisefrance.fr or to the postal address below until **15 March 2020** at the latest.

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Annexe – Provisional timeline

Date	Step of selection process	Persons in charge
By 7 February 2020	Publication of “calls for pilot project ideas”	Project team in coordination with main partners in the respective countries
By 15 March 2020	Submission of short concept notes on project ideas	Potential recipient organisations
By 27 March 2020	Assessment, ranking and suggestion of CN to be selected. Selection of CN and information of candidates (by 10 April 2020)	Project team in consultation with main partners in the respective countries / national advisory board / project steering committee Internal EF/GIZ evaluation committees team
By 7 May 2020	Submission of full pilot project proposals, budgets and additional documents	Potential recipient organisations
By 22 May 2020	Selection of projects and information of candidates on basis of full project proposal	Internal EF/GIZ evaluation committees team
By summer 2020	Preparation and conclusion of contracts with recipient organisations	Project team with GIZ and Expertise France internal procedures and GIZ/EF HQ
By summer 2020	Beginning of implementation of pilot projects	Recipient organisations
By 28 February 2022	End of implementation of pilot projects	Recipient organisations
By 30 April 2022	Financial management concluded	Project team with GIZ and Expertise France internal procedures